

REMARKS

This Response is submitted in reply to the Office Action dated October 30, 2006, in which the Examiner:

rejected claims 1-7 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 3,875,481 to Miller et al.; and

rejected claims 8-13 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Miller in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,549,093 to Severwright.

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections below. Claims 1-13 are currently pending. Claims 1 and 11, directed to a tactile sensor element and array, respectively, are independent claims.

Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Miller. An anticipation rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102 is improper unless a single prior art reference shows or discloses each and every claim recitation. Applicants' claim 1 recites, in part, a tactile sensor element comprising an elastomeric body arranged between first and second pressure transfer layers, the body having a first surface and a second surface opposed to each other, the first and second surfaces having corrugations, and a first electrode arranged on the first surface and a second electrode arranged on the second surface.

Miller does show or disclose each and every claim 1 recitation. For example, Miller does not show or disclose *an* elastomeric body having opposed, corrugated first and second surfaces. Instead, Miller discloses a weighing mat 10, in which ribbed surfaces are formed on only one side of two *separate* layers 14 and 15. Additionally, Miller does not show or disclose respective first and second electrodes arranged on the opposed, corrugated first and second surfaces of an elastomeric body. Instead, Miller discloses the ribbed surfaces of separate layers 14 and 15 sandwich a *single* conductive elastomeric layer 13.

Thus, Miller does not show or disclose each and every recitation of Applicants' claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of claims 1-7 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Miller is improper for at least this reason, and should be withdrawn.

Claims 2-7 were also rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Miller. Claims 2-7 all depend, directly or indirectly, from claim 1 and include additional recitations thereto. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of claims 2-7 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Miller is improper for at least the reasons stated in connection with claim 1.

Claims 8-10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Miller in view of Severwright. A rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is improper unless the Examiner establishes a prima facie case of obviousness. A prima facie case of obviousness requires that the prior art references, alone or in combination, teach or suggest each and every claim recitation.

Claims 8-10 all depend, directly or indirectly, from claim 1 and include additional recitations thereto. Applicants' claim 1 recites, in part, a tactile sensor element comprising an elastomeric body arranged between first and second pressure transfer layers, the body having a first surface and a second surface opposed to each other, the first and second surfaces having corrugations, and a first electrode arranged on the first surface and a second electrode arranged on the second surface.

Miller does not teach or suggest each and every claim 1 recitation. For example, Miller does not teach or suggest *an* elastomeric body having opposed, corrugated first and second surfaces, or respective first and second electrodes arranged on the opposed, corrugated first and second surfaces of the elastomeric body.

Severwright does not remedy the deficiencies of Miller as applied to claim 1, at least in that Severwright also does not teach or suggest *an* elastomeric body having opposed, corrugated first and second surfaces, or respective first and second electrodes arranged on the opposed, corrugated first and second surfaces of the elastomeric body.

Thus, neither Miller nor Severwright, nor the combination thereof, teaches or suggests each and every claim 1 recitation. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of dependent claims 8-10 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Miller in view of Severwright is improper for at least this reason, and should be withdrawn.

Claim 11 was also rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Miller in view of Severwright. A rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is improper unless the Examiner establishes a prima facie case of obviousness. A prima facie case of obviousness requires that the prior art references, alone or in combination, teach or suggest each and every claim recitation.

Applicants' claim 11 is directed to a tactile sensor array comprising, in part, a plurality of sensor elements, and includes similar recitations to those discussed in connection with claim 1. As noted in connection with claim 1, neither Miller nor Severwright, nor the combination thereof, teaches or suggests *an* elastomeric body having opposed, corrugated first and second surfaces, or respective first and second electrodes arranged on the opposed, corrugated first and second surfaces of the elastomeric body.

Thus, neither Miller nor Severwright, nor the combination thereof, teaches or suggests each and every claim 11 recitation. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of claim 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Miller in view of Severwright is improper for at least this reason, and should be withdrawn.

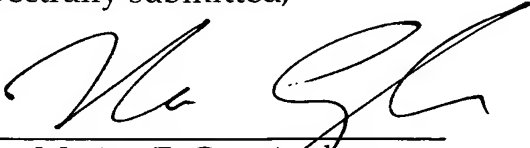
Claims 12 and 13 were also rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Miller in view of Severwright. Claims 12 and 13 depend, directly or indirectly, from claim 11 and include additional recitations thereto. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of claims 12 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Miller in view of Severwright is improper for at least the reasons stated in connection with claim 11, and should be withdrawn.

Having traversed each and every claim rejection, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 1-13 be withdrawn, and claims 1-13 be passed to issue.

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Applicants believe no fees are due in connection with this Response. If any fees are deemed necessary, authorization is hereby granted to charge any such fees to Deposit Account No. 13-0235.

Respectfully submitted,

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